

## MEDIA RELEASE

Level 5, 10 Hickson Road The Rocks  
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
Phone 61 2 8248 6500 Fax 61 2 8248 6599  
sydneyfestival.org.au



# Alim Qasimov Ensemble

## Azerbaijan



*"A fantastic opportunity to encounter rarely heard music, intimately and brilliantly performed."*

**Evening Standard ★★★★★**

*"Mr. Qasimov is simply one of the greatest singers alive, with a searing spontaneity that conjures passion and devotion, contemplation and incantation."*

**New York Times**

Photo by Aga Khan Music Initiative, Sebastian Schutyser

The **Alim Qasimov Ensemble** perform a unique interpretation of two rich Azerbaijani musical traditions: *mugham*, a sparse and poetic classical music which is related to Persian, Turkish and Arabic traditions; and *ashiq* songs, the popular full-throated music of troubadours. The six-piece features Qasimov and his daughter **Fargana Qasimova**, who weave exuberant vocals while instrumentalists perform on lutes, spike fiddles, reed instruments and hand drums.

When Alim and Fargana first began performing together, their musical partnership was a pioneering departure from the solo-vocalist convention. Qasimov's approach is far from conservative, as he melds mugham with other music styles, incorporating jazz and contemporary composition influences.

Qasimov's revelatory devotional music has found fans and collaborators across the world and led to performances with the likes of the **Kronos Quartet** and the late **Jeff Buckley**, who described his singing as *"pure and effortless"*.

In the same culture and genre-transcending league as contemporaries like **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan** and **Ravi Shankar**, Alim Qasimov perceives and presents mugham not only as an ancient art and a part of Azerbaijan's musical and cultural heritage but also as a constantly developing tradition. He continuously searches for ways to reach new heights and new audiences with the joyful, incandescent music of his homeland.

Qasimov was awarded the **International Music Council-UNESCO Music Prize** in 1999, one of the highest international accolades for music. He has recorded nine albums, three with his daughter.

Where            City Recital Hall  
When            21 January at 8pm  
Duration        75mins

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Tickets Premium \$70  
A Reserve \$60/\$54  
B Reserve \$46/\$41  
+ booking fee

Bookings Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876  
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*Presented in collaboration with Aga Khan Music Initiative, a programme of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.*

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